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Organizations: Still Learning To Organize

Abstract: As work becomes more and more dynamic, fluid, uncertain and knowledge based it requires organizations to create order and coordinate efforts to harness the energies found in different factors like Potential, Ecosystem, Rework, Co-evolution, Direction and Happiness of its journey towards the achievement of its goals and objectives. Here through frameworks like the wave like “highs and lows” and so on so forth the “contest and the engage” model have been used to develop constructing a common understanding of the situation, considering “plausibility” more important than “accuracy” against maximum justification and to use commonly available information in uncommon ways supported by structures, roles and interrelationships.

Keywords: Organizations, Learning, Structure, Connections, Understandings

Every aspect of organizational life that creates order and coordination of effort must identify resources of potential energy – in the people, relationship, technologies, products, systems, capabilities, and structures in the organization to activate and align them believing in holistic personhood, holistic understanding of a situation, knowledge creation through learning and connections of intersubjectivity to sustain agility, transformation leading to a connect between culture and climate.

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The Objectives of the paper

a) to help organizations construct a common understanding of a situation as they evolve
b) how can organizations leverage its common resources in uncommon ways

The Need of the paper

Organizations are still not able to reach a watertight agreement on how to “form their own questions about the phenomena” and “create their own intuitive working theories”

The Design of the paper

The paper has been structured into six parts viz, Potential, Ecosystem, Rework, Co-evolution, Direction and Happiness wherein each part explains its role in contributing towards the journey of an organization supported by a framework and a model in achieving success emphasizing that listening to people at every level, is important, both to get a sense of internal dynamics but also to pick up on good ideas.

Potential

Heterogeneity of the individual learning rates against a multilingual, multicultural society, the average rate of imitation, and the relative difficulty of the task stemming from the interplay among the average learning rate and the size and dynamism of the environment talking of decentralization, change at one hand to that complexities justifying firm wide incentives and lateral flows of information of are particularly important in a country like India. where concepts of status and power dominate affected by social hierarchy wherein increase in power leads to improved “executive function ability” and the ability to update “goal-relevant information” and
creating a greater “scope to act at will” resulting in differences in current or historic resource endowments. allowing the possessor some advantage in the form of intra organizational power to share knowledge or pieces of information at strategic times for some gains.

People in India have to understand that the potential of any organization lies in their contribution towards knowledge and skill as they shape the skills and the knowledge that people bring to the table wherein organization size, role differentiation decide on the range of functional skills, Ideas and information encountered sets the tone through socialization to shape individual values and aspirations, affiliation with an employer is a source of reputational capital that may help a person mobilize resources to transition as it is your job that makes you interact with a lot of people because you have to, not because you want to. It also may expose you to interaction partners you may not otherwise have been able to meet and shape the structure of your choices and this why careers of attachment to different firms matter in terms of opportunity.

Furthermore, As operations become routinized organizations find it difficult to invest in exploring alternatives and react to non standard forms of information.

Indian Companies to understand the concept of organizations better need to look at the dimension of “individual action at the workplace” work practices, occupational memberships and their attendant meanings and action that can create patterns of interaction and negotiation, craft opportunities to alter the work and organizational practices and also learn as to how members of occupational groups constructs their worlds that starts at workplace interaction and gets interwoven through working arrangements against a negotiated order perspective against an organizational setting.
Potential also means assessing the concept of structure that decides on the nature of alternatives pursued by individuals, role that different subunits need to undertake. It is believed that individuals do not respond to problems in the “abstract” rather they respond in consonance with the specific roles that are implied or explicated to them, depending on their position within a structure. Though structures largely evolve according to their dynamic laws, sometimes in unexpected ways, but they do provide an entry point for delivery change efforts, thus by changing structures behaviors can be modified and the evolution of capabilities redirected.

Structures also develop endogenous features in the process of industry evolution like calling for changes in specific form of property rights.

Given that every Indian Company does understand the evolution of capabilities but how well are they equipped in measuring their understanding of the basic economics of the system and the forces that shape agency is definitely a concern as it shapes the direction of the effort and also because it draws attention.

We often here of companies getting into espionage or taking special interest in learning to know what knowledge has been acquired and the kind of resources being used rather than concentrating on how “knowing is achieved” or “action is resourced” wherein you study the consequentiality of everyday action and the relationality of the phenomena to discover the language and logic that is being expressed in relation to the practices, once again structure as the medium defines the outcome of the conduct and structures the structure.
The aspect of Potential for Indian Companies and its employees can also be discovered in their ability to communicate not only the task knowledge but also relational knowledge in addition to learning and communicating a relational contract compared to learning and communicating a task knowledge as different pairs of players develop different languages, even though they play in the same environment, take different lengths of time to develop a shared understanding, differences in shared understanding even after it is reached to defining in advance exactly which problems they might find or how they should be solved and also to get the exact description of actual behaviors.\textsuperscript{12}

**Ecosystem**

Employees directly reporting to work without proper training is fatal, as untested literacy skills will result in employees not acquiring a proper letter-sound knowledge, face difficulty in building up of a sight vocabulary, being unable to develop a decoding strategy, not being able to identify the strengths of letter knowledge, content and function words and simple word reading. as there is every possibility for every Indian company to have employees both from the low and as well high socio economic status (SES) backgrounds wherein we see that it is the “greater imagine ability” of the content words that actually influences the reading of the high SES groups on the contrary low SES group employees may not be making full use of the semantic properties of words in reading Thus training is important because to address variations in “frequency of shared reading activities in the home”, “instructive interactions surrounding literacy activities”, “limited materials for promoting letter-sound knowledge” and “levels of phonological awareness”.\textsuperscript{13}
Issues that are internal does matter to an employee where in the form intrinsic motivation an employee sees an activity/task taken up as a goal in itself and is not afraid of making mistakes because errors provide information that guides their learning. It is here the companies need to put in place a “Realise' programme” that will identify the potential in people through structured progression routes - development intervention that will prepare you for it and then helps you succeed when you get there. Because connecting goals to the future creates an ability focus or an orientation for performance and it is here that task is seen as a means to achieve success in relation to “career messages” posted by a company as to “how do you make your employees think about their future by pointing out objects in front of them”14 But task orientation also pays for those believing in deeper levels of cognitive processing and in better performance because goal orientation here depends on “instrumentality that characterizes a task” sans immediate evaluation.15 The logic is clear that “If you don’t identify people with great and different capability - if you don’t develop them - they might stay with you while times are tough but they will leave when times get better again.”

The concept of allowing resistors at workplaces cultivate positive power practices by providing them with opportunities to give proof of their superior understanding in which the “commanded achieve control of an agenda” that is presumed to govern them.14 a well argued report allows resistors to publicize their concerns, willingness to take over the agenda, address topics that are believed to be in the top managers power domain like- stopping activities like assessment & implementation of new practices, refusing to manufacture or sell certain products. Top Management team has to keep pace by showing everything is under control by mobilizing the best talents available, allocating official roles among contenders, creating task forces with clear
road maps, leadership and deadlines, look forward to co-produce new policies in line with new configuration of roles talking of new situation handling capabilities, new forms of work and power relations, creating new material and social conditions for common ground building, modifying positions, new interpretations and priorities etc. All resulting from the productive resistance process wherein the interests of both (company management and the resistors) are addressed against the collective good. Thus companies in India need to learn as to “how resisting is designed”, the “way it is deployed” and “how it leads resisters to create new objects and new knowledge”. Or else unhealthy incidents of violence like the one that happened with Maruti Udyog at Manesar will continue to take place.

The working poor have their own stories to tell right from depending on a narrow set of skills that limits their job options to those who have specialized skills or skills that can transfer easily across different jobs.

To understand coping behaviors we need to look at transitory feeling states comprising target specific emotions like anger or more diffused moods – like feeling down and how they influence appraisals of the situation with levels of personal control, certainty, anticipated effort and responsibility and how does job satisfaction, organizational attachment behaviors matter against emotionally taxing jobs in the graph on career attainment over time and why does fight or flight responses gain prominence in aversive situations because of negative affects, resource depletion, repeated failures.
In the area of employability the working poor are more likely to turn to their neighborhood friends, relatives for job referrals, whereas the more advantaged seek out to diverse sources with whom they are more distantly connected but at times ties “acquaintances” become more valuable in job search owing to richer sources of unique information, valuable referrals and sponsorship. In the area of Performance Management we see that middle class students and adults value independence and uniqueness in their choices they make vis-à-vis that of the working class individuals making choices on a desire to be similar to others and independent with them. High socioeconomic status people emphasize their actions on risk assessment planning and choice vis-à-vis lower SES tend to emphasize virtues like perseverance and hope.

**Rework**

India as a market for business is common to many companies and resources across businesses are also very much similar in organizations. It is this degree of market commonality and resource similarity that a firm enjoys helps it to create new ventures, build assets, compete and if required even fight to finish the competitor also. High market commonality will make a lot of information available to a company but high resource similarity also helps in accurately interpreting that information. It is clear that more and more companies in India are interpreting information and then acting on those interpretations, greater the degree of interlocks and overlap will provide greater access to information, more exposure to emerging opportunities that are helping them to manage their resource dependencies.
Interpreting unexpected occurrences retrospectively and to bring order into ambiguous realities open to multiple interpretations does help to bridge the gap between the reality as it seems to be and how every company or organization in India expects it to be. True making sense of the changes and the ability to respond to these changes depends on the robustness of the “role system” of a company and quality of social interaction in the group that helps to construct a common understanding of a situation rather than depend on their actions itself to test their understandings of the environment.

Pictures, cards, post its, thumbnails are certainly physical manipulation of experiences and ideas embodied in tangible form helping companies to see their thoughts and ideas right in front of them and to physically move around them not necessarily defined a priori, as comparisons could tap into a richer memory of each encounter but things will make sense only when a way is found out to organize them with the “feeling of order” prevailing and shifting the focus to “plausibility” against “accuracy” with belief that idea should enjoy the maximum justification.

for e.g. project rooms to park ideas, experiences and thoughts and to study the connections between them that would not have got noticed if they all weren't together.

Learning from every unfamiliar event through labeling and action that are the outcome of individual bracketing of experience and tentative collective action will help companies to create elaborate new mental structures, identify/trace new structures amongst the existing ones and so talking freely about their upcoming projects to invite opinion, ideas to reinterpret them in light of current cognitive work is gaining acceptance.
The Role System in any company talks about the expanded conceptualization of human agency under different aspects: “iterational,” “projective,” and “practical-evaluative.”

In Iterational an individual’s ability to apply prior knowledge and interpretations is assessed based on his past orientations, Projective talks of searching for the future and therefore involves going beyond one’s experience and prior learning to search for new understanding. Practical-evaluative agency resides in any kind of work done through reflection that individuals carry out while responding to emergent situations and therefore “actual information acquisition behaviors” of executives and “influences on scanning” are being given more attention visavis perception and objective health of the firm. 22

The role system requires managers to expose themselves to frameworks of tacit knowledge where they can impose structure, impart meaning even to ambiguous situational information, for e.g. interruptions in routine work create interest to search for knowledge wherein the ways used to scan for information becomes more important as this leads to acquiring of different kinds of knowledge embedded within the practices of organizational daily work along with productive inquiry is useful to ongoing innovation. 22

The executives are still not sure in their ascriptions of the domains of knowledge important to their respective firms as some believe technological effectiveness is critical to success whereas others appreciate the value of technology but give more weight age to cost efficiency and process control (variables in the process itself to come up with a situation) 22

Nowadays the biggest difficulty that a recruiter in India faces is to have people with expertise, where everybody says “Oh I can do it” but it often turns out that they can’t. 22
Every new recruit today has problems in fitting his formal education into a practice/situation perspective because it is only through a deeper level of action that one learns how to develop novel solutions through knowledge adaptation, something to be used in future, generating new ways of understanding.22

Other problems like not looking beyond meaningful knowledge work, maintaining of status quo, adopting a passive posture to knowledge work, not looking for uncommon use of knowledge or create better knowledge that influences commonly available information to be used in uncommon ways.22 Recently India23 and China signed up trade agreements despite current trade deficits and other differences24.

Ability to acquire knowledge resources, through different scanning orientations will speak for a manager’s “field of vision, analysis of linkages amongst executive knowledge schemes used but also of the ability to promote the uncommon use of knowledge”22

I am happy to admit that some very big Indian based multinational companies like Aditya Birla Group (having operations in 40 countries and earns more than half its revenue outside India)25 in recent decades have gone in for restructuring by emphasizing on the integration of people, systems, and fungibility wherein ownership of the brand rather than the family has become important for its employees26, businesses of today talk of creating a global "virtual headquarters," where in “vision-setting and -coordinating activities and centers of excellence are placed in different areas around the world” all “for building teams of specialists geographically close to the relevant pool to meet the region's needs in each service”, to get neutral diversity
much faster than you would have crafted and also to get some of the very entrenched local practices, relate to different forms of professionalism from different places. Learn to go into the depths of people and problems, to see larger interlinkages that play out to address the rationale of “speeding up in decision making” in moving headquarter activities closer to high-priority markets without having to shut up the home headquarters. Concepts like the “need for a split center”, with a “site in a mature market” and “another in an emerging one” so that “slim corporate centers” can focus on their “perennial headquarters roles” thus upholding the organization’s values, developing corporate strategy, and managing the portfolio of businesses are fast catching up. In simple words understand the logic “grouping of units by criteria” than by “physical proximity”. Formal training nowadays at many large corporations is dispensed through “corporate universities” that stress on continual upgrade of internal knowledge to stay fighting fit.

The Contest and the Engage Model: Left Hand – Contest; Right Hand- Engage
A- (studying connections) Interlocks and Overlaps & Ambiguous realities) The cycle starts with the question of accessing where we are right now, what does the short term future look like, seeking perspectives31, what is the competition doing,

B- (Multiple interpretations) What is the purpose, What does success look like? Are we on a trajectory to meet our medium-term goals, Does our strategy need to change?

C- (Common Understanding) What actions do we need to take to improve our performances, what resources do we need, what impact will these actions have on our performance, studying sequence patterns, influences, and their effects32.

D- (Plausability and feeling of order) How should we execute plans and manage the existing business? Comparing between “seeding vs soloing” learning sequences32.

E- (Retention, Role System, Socialization) Share a common language for discussing strategies and a common process for developing them.

F- (connect thoughts with the rest of the team-structuring opportunities31) Actively encourage and support free, rigorous fact-based debate with no blame culture.

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Coevolution

The arena of co-evolution will tell us as to how both the organization and the people associate as independent species adapting to changes in the other.

Every Indian company does have system of activities designed that accounts for both complementarities and substitution effects because resources and capabilities after entry becomes path dependent because decisions made at entry will create differences over time not only between activities but also within calling for decomposition of capabilities at the activity level and this also affects boundary choices for establishing firm level routines and integrative capabilities.  

Asset specificity, uncertainty and transaction frequency drive transaction costs. Knowledge accumulation and spillovers will promote standardization of technology specifications, thus reducing the technological uncertainty, asset specificity and potential economic hold ups that shoot up transaction costs. Although asset specificity never vanishes completely but aspects of asset specificity such as physical colocation and the learning costs engaged in switching partners remain significant even for higher standardized products but its relative importance declines over time owing to influence of transient factors for eg “after a dominant design is set” “product features become largely predictable” and “innovations are mainly add-ons to existing well-known” production technologies.  

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Integrative capabilities that talk of putting together activities via communication and coordination across the components of a system across value chain should concern Indian companies the most because ability to diversify gets a boost when it is able to reconfigure its activity experience acquired in related industries with new industry’s requirements, 33

For every established Indian company interfaces between value chain activities have simplified over time because product features have got gradually standardized thus the organization of each value chain activity has become more modular which has increased their ability to outsource because being equipped with internal capabilities like first hand activity experience, “learn by doing” helps you to credibly threaten to internalize operations and fight opportunism and hold ups 33

Companies in India are often reported to be over overstaffed as compared to their foreign counterparts but this large internal staff will be more effective if they can organize their internal functions as a “knowledge hierarchy” where some individuals specialize as occupational experts and leverage the talents of others for more mundane work.

Larger internal staffs can also make use of knowledge hierarchies to narrow the occupational expertise gap with suppliers. Knowledge Hierarchies can attract talent by allowing inexperienced to value the chance to work with and learn from the experts.

It can also motivate talent to have a number of advantages for learning and expertise development within the firm even from occupational experts that may increase the firm’s absorptive capacity for knowledge from its environment about new developments, understand them, assimilate the information and develop superior Human Capital “on maximum possible
conditions of knowledge work” especially where the scope of occupational HC development opportunities is inherently limited. 34

Next comes the issue of governance structures in place that a company has wherein incentive intensity, administrative control and contract law regime work as its tools, this working together gives rise to new alternatives in the market, complex contracting and hierarchy for instance economic incentives available in markets are more intense than in organizations, Administrative controls, put constraints and shape behavior, are more accessible in organizations than in markets and legal regimes that helps companies enjoy forbearance from court intervention. 35

Alignment in governance structures provide a degree of protection for quasi rents by investing in specific assets but bounded rationality and opportunism can create complexity and misrepresentation and view governance from the angle of transaction costs and this is why it becomes important to understand “how managers should design transactions”, “what and which transactions should firms engage in”, why “specific investments are chosen” and reason for performance differences. 35

Thus how to embed sustainability into the organizational culture is a big puzzle where goals like fulfillment and innovation through various means is driven by the desire to challenge what is taken for granted, anything that endures within the system over time, remove difficulty in knowing how to practice theory in a specific context, more so in differentiating between the knower and the known where the position on knowing is a matter of a subject “in here” looking at or reflecting on an object “out there” 36
Direction

Working together for the first time, with some from a different knowledge domain against a fluid team boundary and temporary association to transform the different specialized knowledge into an integrative co-generated solution on time is indeed a difficult task because of problems in communicating, interpreting and attributing their ideas and previous common experiences in learning from each other that could facilitate knowledge integration. 37

The management of every company in India should have practices to allow employees to voice their fragments of observations by sharing unexplained and surprising ideas, depersonalize shared knowledge, co-create a scaffold that decreases time spent in learning each other’s language, or translate a member’s own knowledge into the language of the scaffold, reframe the scaffold to look at problems with new solution ideas, focus on a narrow set of depersonalized conflicts, keeping attention to common ideas, move the scaffold aside by inviting external residents to provide new perspective, sustain engagement by eliciting ideas, sharing the effort, and applauding small successes 37

All this will help in transforming one’s knowledge to a collective knowledge generating new ideas and help build new foundations on the basis of it and provide an opportunity to express task–related doubts collectively, obtain reassurance that doubts are not misinterpreted as a lack of commitment to the team. 37
Changes in technology or in authority cause disruption in performances leading to breaking down of existing interdependencies in search of finding out new ways of coordinating, secondly identifying the elements missing across cases accounting for the differences, third step need to create elements characterized by performances producing patterns that constitute new elements of an activity like new ways of doing work will help every Indian company develop new functional systems, relationships, service levels and business processes, fourth identifying forming patterns emphasizing of performances that create links among the different elements of the coordinating mechanism leading to new experiences of disruption, new absences to orient toward and lastly how well the new “state of being” gets stabilized relatively against the overarching organizational governance setting.  

We may have advanced systems and structures in place but is people who drive the business and we need to understand the interplay between learning, managerial intervention and allocation of decision rights.

To give things a shape Indian companies need to delegate decision rights to layers where there is relevant knowledge with the option of, the principal setting the managerial intervention to the lower level (thus losing some control) because decisions are independent and agents have some cognition or beliefs about what the organization should do as regards not only on the decision items allocated to them but on all decision items. Because “control” itself does not guarantee success in implantation of preferred policies correctly whereas “learning” opens the door to learn the best policies even if it not known to them.
Controls have their own problems as they can be market related talking of distributive fairness judgments, bureaucratic emphasizing procedural fairness judgments or class controls highlighting interpersonal fairness judgments and their relationship has to be studied against job satisfaction as unfair application can destroy subordinate confidence, develop weak control perceptions, create ambiguity in their role expectations, kill the interest to accede to authorities’ efforts to direct their work.40

The Boards of Indian Companies have to be careful about the use of structures that embed reciprocal interrelating into the roles where high-quality connections have in common a keen awareness of and attunement to the needs of the other, stemming from the recognition and validation of one's self by others. Participants should treat each other as subjects rather than objects.

As participants come and go Organizations should maintain the patterns of intersubjectivity by connecting intimate intersubjectivity with generic intersubjectivity as the quality of susceptibility of an interaction if replaced i.e. capability to make mutually reinforcing interpretations is lost and people thereby interacting are substituted/replaced then sensemaking will cease to persist and knowledgeable responses cannot be had. Thus participants must be socialized from the start into accepting the organization's goals without question, thus enabling the organization to achieve “control” without either “hierarchy or contracts.”41
Indian companies also need to look at this aspect of retaining talent by differentiating the anticipation of employees experiencing emotions, as positive emotions act to facilitate the occurrence of an event whereas negatives act to prevent it. Like anticipating positive emotions upon the completion of a project does increase one’s level of commitment to the project.

"Emotion is not for dealing with the event as it happens as much as for stimulating reflection on it afterward" in terms of adjustment, in role performance and helping behaviors.\(^\text{42}\)

Right-wrong decisions pit a moral value (e.g., honesty) against basic self-interest, doing the wrong can be increasingly enticing when self interest comes before and the situation, its norms, economic features, are seen as viable interpretation in social exchanges like conversation, contemplation or reconstruct explanations to justify such inclinations does call the need for companies in India to design moral decision-making processes, integrate them into training and implement policies that mandate a “cooling-off period” or multiple levels of approval for consequential decisions or support “institutional analogues for contemplation”, and “ethics hotlines for institutional conversation”\(^\text{43}\) or else unpleasant incidents like The Satyam Computer Services scandal\(^\text{44}\) in 2009 will continue to take place.

**Happiness**

Every company talks of leadership programmes not only for the well-being of their employees, but also of their employees’ families but it is context, interpretation and differences to the way of thinking that matters\(^\text{45}\), it is here we need Management programs and systems to address issues when leaders have different but interdependent responsibilities under shared leadership\(^\text{46}\). Leaders have to be like Carers "physically and emotionally available for and competent at
creating holding environments" aiming to raise team's potency, collective agency, and transcendent hope., while the cared for need to be "appropriately receptive without running too far away from or jumping too close to others." 47 Leaders in India companies have to be self aware on discussing how they believe their views are affected by their professional backgrounds on general vs context specific issues48.

The belief nowadays is that You can't learn from others if you think you already know it all and this has made leaders to allow followers to vocalize their uncertainties and doubts, dance to the tune that "if an idea or plan isn't broken, don't develop a fix it' mentality" instead build on current foundations rather than start fresh to build something that was all their own creation, allow followers to be "hands on" where you say "Please take the lead. I'm getting too emotionally reactive here. I am not fit to be dealing with this right now." And why not if personal development is seen as a legitimate workplace goal, then this is also one of the ways through which I feel that companies in India can increase the followers'(subordinates)' intrinsic motivation i.e. "happiness" to be engaged in their jobs.49 Thus it was the same thing that both Mahatma Gandhi50 and Jamshedjee N. Tata had envisioned in those days of British India "to see the intellect of India develop on lines of self-help and self-reliance".51

Framework52 –
Touching the highs and the lows of wave like points to reach the destination
Potential -
Strengths of Individual- Imitation /learning /Mobilization/Opportunities
Assets - Tools , Processes , Structures –Relational Knowledge ( Policies & Analytics )

Ecosystem
Teamwork & Coaching ( Consistency & Fairness , Alignment & Collaboration )

Rework
Execution ( Ownership & Quality ) – Trust , Problem Solving , Clear expectations &
Usable Feedback – Results , Achievements & Pride of Workmanship

Co Evolution
Effect and Value of the Work , Recognition , Respect & Status in terms of effects

Directions
Strategy Setting ( Debate & Commitment ) Purpose ( Philosophy & Culture )

Happiness
Promotions , Preferment , Satisfaction , Self Esteem & Confidence , Engagement

**Limitations :**

The paper is conceptual and has been prepared with thoughts based on my observations and not supported by proper experience of the social world .

High Order functional thought can be had when there is sound Archival & Scenario based Study, Many Subjective Interpretations of the controls yet to be known , Generalization of the applicability of many items across control systems still to be known so on so forth Many
elemental & processual issues still to be learned with regard to the connection between intimate intersubjectivity with generic intersubjectivity and its effectiveness can be judged when it raises new questions, add new dimensions to bring out the richness and suggest new ways forward in theorizing.  

Conclusions:

While a company may be known for being creative, successful and innovative, but it is the culture inside the company that allows creativity, integrity and respect to thrive and also makes it known as “organization”. At the end it is the factor of “power through the people” creating identities like extraordinary sense of place and not “power over” depending on resources that looks outs for ways to connect with people in tune with the objectives of an organization.

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